



OFFICE OF THE CHAIR
JOE A. MARTINEZ, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DISTRICT 11

Memorandum

To: George Burgess, County Manager

From: Joe A. Martinez, Chairman 

Date: July 26, 2006

Re: Rubber Sidewalks

I would like you and your staff to look into an alternative form of sidewalks that is currently being used in various parts of the Country. They are rubber sidewalks. Rubbersidewalks of Gardena, California has been making these slabs since 2001. They are environmentally friendly as they use discarded tires, which we spoke about during my Earth Dade presentation, and are easier on the joints of users. Additionally, it seems that tree roots do not crack the rubber slabs. I was very impressed with what I found out about them and the benefits they provide. They are costlier than concrete which of course is a drawback but in the long term, they pay for themselves.

Although we might not use them on regular sidewalks, I want to explore the possibility of placing them within our parks. Many people use these walkways to jog, walk or train and they seem to be kinder to the joints than concrete. Who knows, maybe we can work out a deal where we can ship them our tires, since the State took away that fee from the County, and we could negotiate a reduced price. Either way, I have several walkways that are in the works within District 11, and other Commissioners might also like to explore this option. They also come in two shades of gray and terracotta orange.

Also, we sometimes replace broken sidewalks with asphalt, which is in short supply, and residents really do not like them. These patches are sometimes left there for months if not longer. Maybe we could replace them with the gray rubber ones which would be a better match to the existing concrete ones and the tree roots that have caused the concrete slabs to crack don't seem to affect the rubber ones. This would help us cut costs and maintenance as to continuous replacements.

Please provide a detailed report within 45 days outlining the viability of this option being used in Miami Dade County and whether we can use our discarded/used tires and obtain a more competitive price while ultimately providing a better product.

JM/jim

Cc: Honorable Mayor Carlos Alvarez
Honorable Vice-Chairman Dennis C. Moss and
Members of the Board of County Commissioners
Esther Calas, Director, Public Works Department
Roger Hernstadt, Director, Office of Capital Improvement
Vivian Donnell Rodriguez, Director, Parks and Recreation Department
Murray Greenberg, County Attorney